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SUBJECT: NEWLY ELECTED SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE NANCY PELOSI; US-LATIN  
AMERICAN TIES; MIDDLE EAST; US-ARGENTINE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP;  
DEATH OF HUSSEIN; IRANIAN PRESIDENT AHMADINEJAD AND THE HOLOCAUST;  
01/05/07; BUENOS AIRES

## 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's key international stories include Democrats taking control of both the US House of Representatives and Senate for the first time in a dozen years; Rep. Nancy Pelosi's selection as the first woman House leader in US history; Pelosi's statements about revisiting ties between the US and Latin America; the US-Argentine bilateral relationship; and the ever-present tension in the Middle East.

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries one op-ed story on Saddam Hussein's execution and another on Iranian President Ahmadinejad's statements about the Holocaust.

## 2. OPINION PIECES

- "The most powerful woman in the United States asks to revisit US-Latin American ties"

Mariano Zucchi, columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (01/05) "Nancy Pelosi became the first woman House leader in US history... Today, she is considered the most powerful woman in the country because apart from being the spokesperson and leader of the representatives who will contend with the Bush administration, she is second in the presidential succession line after VP Dick Cheney.

"During an (e-mail) interview with 'Clarín,' she reiterated that resuming talks with Iran and Syria is necessary to stabilizing the Middle East, something that is rejected by US President Bush. She also asserted that Republicans overlooked ties with Latin America and voiced her support for free trade agreements with South American countries.

"Asked what Democrats can do to reverse the deep anti-US feeling in the world raised by the war in Iraq, Pelosi answered 'The war in Iraq, the unilateral approach to it and some operational aspects, particularly the abuse of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, have damaged the US image in the world. In order to repair this damage, we need to commit ourselves to a multilateral approach and international institutions.'

"... Regarding the changes that Democrats could bring into US-Latin American relations now that they are in control of Capitol Hill, Pelosi said 'We need to strengthen our ties with our Latin American neighbors. Efforts should also be focused on a strong bilateral commitment to economic development, democratic institutions, health care and education.'"

- "A leader"

Paula Lugones, international columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (01/05) "Neither Condoleezza Rice nor Hillary Clinton is today the most powerful woman in US politics but Nancy Pelosi. She is not only second in the presidential succession line (after VP Dick Cheney) but also the 'face' of the opposition that will put George W. Bush between the devil and the deep blue sea during the last two years of his presidency.

"She is also the one to instruct legislators to vote critical measures such as sending or withdrawing US troops to and from Iraq, or solving the situation of undocumented immigrants. Above all, she will be in charge of bargaining with and setting limits on a president that usually makes decisions (some of them wrong, as we all know) alone or supported by a small group of friends."

- "Hoods and gallows"

Daily-of-record "La Nación" carries an op-ed piece by contributor Mex Urtizberea, who writes (01/05) "... The picture of a hooded group hanging a man (even a despicable dictator) in the name of the civilized world, with full consent of the international community and presented as lawful action, has prompted no reflection in me but a deep feeling of shame for them.

"... The method and the concept are shameful, as well as the hoods and the applause.

"Both dictators just like the hanged man as well as the self-proclaimed owners of democracy (who end up using barbarism to fight barbarism) are shameful.

"... If justice remains the action of hanging a man, then let us not fall under delusion- the world has made no progress at all."

- "The return of fascism"

Daily-of-record "La Nación" carries an op-ed story by Bernardo Kliksberg, honorary professor at the National University of Buenos Aires, who says (01/05) "David Duke, the most well-known racist in the US, formerly a major teacher of the Ku Klux Klan, is back, as well as Roberto Faurisson, European racist leader, Wolfgang Frhlich, Austrian neo-Nazi leader, George Kadar, and Georges Thiel... Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad rescued them from forgetfulness when he and other well-known fascists and neo-Nazis organized a seminar last December to show the world that the Holocaust was a myth.

"... According to the most prominent historians of the Holocaust, this could not have been possible without the silence of a big part of the world. In those countries where people rejected genocide such as Denmark and Bulgaria, a large number of Jewish lives were saved. It would be immoral if the (Ahmadinejad's) call to wipe out memories of the Holocaust and destroy Israel is supported once more by the silence of many. The time has come to make the voice of free men and women heard to bring back the memory while showing that new forms of racism and genocide will no longer escape unpunished"

- "Argentina's domestic priority in foreign policy"

Jorge Elias, political columnist of daily-of-record "La Nación," comments (01/05) "... In 2003, Bush wanted to know whether Argentine President Nestor Kirchner was a leftist. Kirchner said 'I am a Peronist.'

"In a little more than three years, Bush understood that (Kirchner's mention of) his Peronist affiliation had not been an overstatement of his ideology but a sign of pragmatism...

"The Latin American left wing did not represent a problem for Bush. Populism was in fact a problem and by correlation, the impaired image of the US. In Bush's eyes, Kirchner was a pragmatic who definitely had on his desk (information on) the Central Bank reserves, the country's trade balance, its energy stock and the government revenues...

"In Bolivia (where he, Chavez and Lula supported Evo Morales), Kirchner proved through his participation in the crises of the Mesa administration that he was to be reliable.

"... On the brink of mid-term elections, Bush started the last two years of office without a Republican majority on Capitol Hill. As soon as his new Ambassador to Argentina, Earl Anthony Wayne, landed in Buenos Aires, he deployed a hectic agenda of meetings with ministers and government officials in order to recover ground."

### 13. EDITORIALS

- "Tension in the Middle East"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" editorializes (01/05) "The situation in the Middle East continues raising great concern. On the one hand, Saddam Hussein's execution does not seem to have changed the fragile situation in Iraq, which is still merged into an extremely violent sectarian war between Shiites and Sunnites. And, on the other hand, in Lebanon, a crowd made up by Lebanese and Palestinian Shiites under the command of Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, seem to have successfully besieged PM Fouad Siniora's administration and demanded Siniora's resignation. Shiites are roughly only one-third of the Lebanese people and they are supported by Iran and Syria, which are, in turn, backed by Hezbollah.

"However, Fouad Siniora, with the outright support of Saudi Arabia, the US and most of the people of his country, is not willing to resign or compromise. He wants the dispute to be solved on a negotiating table without any sort of foreign pressure.

"... Furthermore, the complicated situation in Palestinian territories ... Amid deprivation, armed clashes between supporters of Fatah and Hamas have taken place... Now, this confrontation is seemingly over and Palestinians are heading for elections with no certain date.

"Meanwhile, Iran is arming Hamas and Egypt with Israel's consensus, and delivers weapons to Fatah... Israeli PM Ehud Olmert, who has recently met with Abbas, has attempted to spur a peace process already stalled for months...

"This situation reveals that the Middle East confrontation is today the most difficult and dangerous conflict to be solved by the international community. Far from finding a road to peace, events

made clear that some related points of potential violence should be simultaneously tackled.

"The weakened stance of the US resulting from its intervention in Iraq calls for firm action by the international community heading in every aspect towards peace while including the UN, where Korean Ban Ki-Moon has taken office as Secretary General."

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